

INFORMATION ITEM

2018 Priorities Update

Summary: This report provides a mid-year update on the Council's staff priorities for 2018 that are being carried out in addition to core program functions. The Chief Deputy Executive Officer will present the priorities and be available to answer questions from Council members.

Background

At the January 2018 Council meeting, Chief Deputy Executive Officer Jessica Law presented a proposed set of annual staff priorities that would guide and direct staff work over the course of the year. The presentation today provides mid-year update on milestones achieved and the projected level of effort remaining.

The 2018 Priorities are organized into three main themes:

- **Strengthen and Implement the Delta Plan:** Continue focused efforts and work on amending Delta Plan chapters, as well as improving and strengthening tracking, reporting, and implementation of the Delta Plan consistent with the Delta Reform Act and State regulatory requirements.
- **Build Capacity for One Delta, One Science:** Continue building the Delta-wide science community by hosting the 2018 Bay-Delta Science Conference and other forums to communicate the latest science; convene independent peer-review and synthesis panels that uphold a strong standard of scientific excellence; and advance the scientific understanding of the Delta through critical science investigations and support of the Delta Independent Science Board (Delta ISB).
- **Enhance Council Leadership and Communications:** Continue to further the role and mission of the Council through development of a strategic and operations plan that will guide staff activities for the next five years; based on that, develop a communications and public participation plan to foster inclusive and open engagement in Delta stewardship.

See Attachment 1 for a graphical depiction of the 2018 Priorities.

Council staff has made significant progress on the majority of the priorities. See Table 1 for a description of progress, including major milestones, work efforts remaining and expected end date. Please note an asterisk (*) indicates where staff and consultant efforts are likely to extend beyond 2018.

Table 1. Status of 2018 Priorities

2018 Priorities	Major Milestones Completed	Ongoing Work Efforts	Expected End Date
STRENGTHEN AND IMPLEMENT THE DELTA PLAN			
Conveyance, Storage Systems, and the Operation of Both (CSO); Delta Levees Investment Strategy (DLIS); and Performance Measures (PM) amendments to the Delta Plan, including CEQA review	April 2018	Council adopted three amendments to the Delta Plan that address CSO, DLIS, and Performance Measures and certified the environmental analysis at the April meeting. The rulemaking process through Office of Administrative Law is underway and will be submitted by the end of the year.	December 2018
Complete Ecosystem amendment, including CEQA review	February - June 2018	Major milestones achieved include release and review of three synthesis papers by the Delta ISB, public workshop, stakeholder outreach, several interagency committee and subcommittee meetings. Remaining work to develop policies, recommendations, and performance measures is well underway, and environmental review will begin in the fall.	March 2019*
Initiate and complete Delta Plan five-year review	May 2018	Staff has completed an initial assessment which was presented to the Council in May, and has secured contractor assistance to review plan performance and identify priorities for future revisions.	December 2018
Evaluate and strengthen Council's regulatory role for covered actions	January - June 2018	Staff are continuing to support Delta Plan consistency certification of covered actions with early consultation, and coordination on potential covered actions. Staff are ready to release improvements to the online certification system.	December 2018
Develop climate vulnerability assessment for the Delta	April - June 2018	Council approved a consultant contract in May following a competitive bid process. Project kickoff begins in June to develop a climate change vulnerability assessment for the Delta in order to deepen our understanding of the likely ramifications of climate change in the Delta.	December 2019*
Develop reporting system for outcome and output performance measures	April - June 2018	Consultant contract approved following a competitive bid process. Project kickoff begins in June to develop a user-friendly reporting system for the output and outcome performance measures that sets a reference for future implementation of the Delta Plan and related activities.	December 2018

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BUILD CAPACITY FOR ONE DELTA, ONE SCIENCE			
Initiate and complete the Delta Science Plan five-year review and update	April 2018	Staff completed a public workshop on initial draft in April. Public draft will be released in July for additional public input and Delta ISB review. The Delta Plan, adopted in 2013, is a shared vision and living framework for promoting collaborative science and accelerating the discovery of new understanding in the Delta.	December 2018
Sponsor 2018 Bay-Delta Science Conference	January - April 2018	Staff is coordinating this year's 10th Biennial Bay-Delta Science Conference, to be held Sept. 10-12, 2018, in Sacramento, and will showcase the latest scientific information about the Bay-Delta system to improve water and environmental decision-making.	September 2018
Identify and pursue funding for critical science	January - June 2018	Council and staff issued contracts for FY 17/18 funding consistent with the 2017-2021 Science Action Agenda. Also, staff secured additional \$2 million for science through the budget process for FY 18/19, and are working with a Federal agency for an additional \$1.75 million. Staff is developing competitive proposal solicitation process for Fall 2018.	Annual/Ongoing*
Develop an Adaptive Management Forum	January - July 2018	Staff is coordinating an interagency planning committee to develop the Forum with a focus on building capacity for planning, and implementing adaptive management and sharing lessons learned from the Delta and elsewhere. Forum program announcement to be issued in July.	October 2018
Finalize the Draft Water Supply Adaptive Management Framework and begin to develop implementation plan	March - June 2018	An initial draft of the Framework was vetted with members of the Delta ISB and stakeholders, and will undergo full Delta ISB review in the Fall.	December 2018
Lead integrated ecosystem modeling efforts to support decision-making	January - April 2018	Consultant contract to support the Integrated Modeling Steering Committee Consultant was approved in June. Project kickoff begins in July. The steering committee will develop a set of pilot projects to support decision-making and will continue to report progress to the DPIIC in 2018 and 2019.	July 2019*

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2018 Priorities	Major Milestones Completed	Ongoing Work Efforts	Expected End Date
Provide independent peer review, advice, and synthesis services to support State and Federal agencies	Annual/Ongoing	Staff will continue to provide independent scientific peer review, advice and synthesis services to support state and federal agencies' decision-making.	Annual/Ongoing*
Provide science-support for EcoRestore Adaptive Management Program	March - June 2018	Staff is continuing to work through an interagency group to review and revise a final whitepaper on adaptive management of restoration projects in the Delta.	December 2018
ENHANCE LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNICATIONS			
Strengthen State-Federal Agency coordination through Delta Plan Interagency Implementation Committee (DPIIC)	April 2018	DPIIC meeting #9 was held in April with priority-focused discussions on ecosystem restoration, science-support for decision-making, science governance, agricultural sustainability, and climate change, among other topics. Staff are continuing to plan for meeting #10 in November.	November 2018
Develop five-year strategic and operations plan	-	Staff will develop a five-year strategic and operations plan to guide its future efforts and better position the Council as the leader in facilitating the achievement of the coequal goals. Staff anticipates that this plan will include an executive team training program and succession planning for key staff and leadership. Based on workload considerations, this effort will likely extend into 2019.	June 2019*
Develop communications and public participation plan	-	This effort will consider how the Council can enhance its position as a leader in the Delta to communicate about, provide outreach to, and engage the public in the achievement of the coequal goals. Based on workload considerations, this effort will likely extend into 2019.	June 2019*

CORE FUNCTIONS

In addition to this year's major initiatives, we will continue to perform the core staff functions that support Delta Plan and Delta Science Plan implementation. By attending to these fundamental responsibilities, the Council fulfills its duty to coordinate the Delta Plan's implementation and the Delta Science Program's long-standing duties.

- **Legislative and Policy Analysis:** Continue to ensure that the Council is kept apprised of major legislative and policy initiatives at state and federal levels that would impact the Council's work.
- **Communications and External Affairs:** Meeting support, the development of an annual report, other publications, video blogs, factsheets, and website updates, and presentations; as well as science communications support for seminars, brown bags, symposia.
- **Administration and Human Resources:** Support for compliance, contracting and administration of programs, including staff training, budgeting and human resources development.
- **Council, Delta Independent Science Board, and DPIIC Support:** Support for meetings of the Council, the Delta ISB, and DPIIC include logistics, preparing reports and briefing panels, and post meeting follow-up.
- **Other Activities:** Attention will also be paid to other activities that advance the Delta Plan, as time and resources allow. Emerging opportunities or circumstances may necessitate responses by the Council that could shift emphases. As Council staff track other activities that affect the Delta, we will alert the Council to actions that may significantly affect Delta Plan implementation, so that priorities can be adjusted as necessary.

Fiscal Information

Implementation of the 2018 Priorities are within the Council's existing budget for FY 17/18 and FY 18/19. Where necessary, Council staff will contract with outside experts and consultants to assist on work products.

List of Attachments

Attachment 1: 2018 Priorities Factsheet

Attachment 2: Staff Report (January 2018) Proposed 2018 Priorities

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